

Housing and Health Committee	
Meeting Date	4 th July 2023
Report Title	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 – 2027
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing and Communities
Lead Officer	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing and Communities
Classification	Open
Recommendations	The committee is recommended to: 1. To approve the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 – 2027

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report asks the Housing and Health committee to consider the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 – 27.

2 Background

- 1.1 The current Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was adopted in 2019. The full strategy can be found at [Housing-and-Homelessness-Strategy-2019-2023.pdf \(swale.gov.uk\)](https://www.swale.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-07/Housing-and-Homelessness-Strategy-2019-2023.pdf) the strategy has four strategic priorities which are:
1. Preventing homelessness
 2. Reduce the need for emergency and temporary accommodation
 3. Delivering the right homes in the right places
 4. Improve conditions in existing homes
- 1.2 The current strategy is coming to the end of its life and therefore a review of progress against the current strategy, analysis of service data has helped inform and shape a revised strategy. Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must carry out a review of homelessness in their area and publish a homelessness strategy which sets out what it plans to do to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 1.3 The revised strategy sets out the Council's priorities to tackle Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping in Swale between 2023 – 2027. It looks to build on the foundations set out in the previous strategy and looks to address the changing and more complex needs of residents in our borough who need to access housing services.
- 1.4 The Strategy sets out our aims to run a strong housing service, that is the safety net for those most vulnerable in society and enables us to meet our statutory obligations set out in housing legislation. It recognises the need to

work with our partner agencies across all sectors to ensure we provide an appropriate service for our residents.

1.5 The revised proposed priorities are:

- Delivering Affordable Homes
- Preventing Homelessness
- Developing a more efficient housing options service
- Improve conditions in existing homes

1.6 The Strategy came before the Housing and Health Committee in November 2022 and then was subject to a 12-week consultation period. The summary of results from the consultation can be found in Appendix I and a summary of comments with responses in Appendix II. The main concerns highlighted relate to housing delivery that is covered by the Local Plan and is out of scope for this strategy. There is also a focus on park homes and camper vans, which again fall outside of the scope of this policy as would fall within planning legislation.

1.7 During the consultation period the Renters Reform Bill 2023 was introduced in Parliament. The strategy has been updated to reflect this and we will ensure when the final Act is introduced the responsibilities and impacts relating to the Council are fully reviewed and implemented.

3 Proposals

3.1 To approve the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 – 2027.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 That the strategy is not adopted, this is not recommended as there needs to be a clear strategy of delivery housing services in Swale.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 This strategy was subject to a 12-week consultation.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>Priority 1: Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all</p> <p>Priority 3: Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>The current revenue budget for Housing Services is £463,140 (Private Sector Housing), £3,366,660 (Housing Options) and £67,230 (Affordable Housing). Currently, there is a significant projected overspend in year for temporary accommodation c. £1m.</p> <p>In addition to the Council net revenue budget. A range of grants are received by the Council.</p> <p>Housing Prevention Grant = £730,343 in 2023/24 RSI Grant = £1,937,632 in 2022/25 (3-year settlement). Staying Put Grant = £57k</p> <p>In addition, the Council also receives a Capital Grant to provide Disable Facilities Grants through the Better Care Fund £2,917,102 in 2023/24.</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must carry out a review of homelessness in their area and publish a homelessness strategy which sets out what it plans to do to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.</p> <p>The Renters Reform Bill 2023 has just been introduced in parliament and is likely to have impacts on Council Services.</p>
Crime and Disorder	<p>The housing service works closely with the Community Safety Partnership in managing clients that have an offending background. Having stable and affordable housing, can assist in breaking the re-offending cycle.</p>
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	<p>Grants promoted by the Private Sector Housing Scheme can assist with improvements with EPC ratings.</p>
Health and Wellbeing	<p>Housing is a wider determinant of health and having secure and decent homes significantly improves the health and wellbeing on residents.</p>
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	<p>The housing service undertakes the most Safeguarding referrals than any other department in</p>

	the Council, the nature and circumstances of some of the clients mean they are very vulnerable and therefore support is required from partner agencies.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The provision and affordability of Temporary Accommodation continues to be a corporate risk.
Equality and Diversity	A Community Impact Assessment has been conducted. The consultation also sought details on protected characteristics of responders. Due to the legislation and individual policies taken account of Equality and Diversity issues no further action was identified as part of this strategy. The Council's Equalities Strategy is being refreshed and should any new information be found from this, we would look to update the relevant strategies and policies.
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

7.1 None

8 Background Papers

8.1 There are no background papers.